



## **Understanding COVID Exposure in Fitness Facilities**

*Wearing a mask can help prevent the spread of COVID-19*

During these unique and unprecedented times, we know that no public facility, whether it be a grocery store, a doctor's office or a health and fitness club, can completely prevent the spread of COVID-19, but we have made significant progress in the last year studying the virus and learning methods through which to protect ourselves and our communities.

**The number one way to protect yourself from COVID-19 is by wearing a mask, a health and safety precaution that OHFA fully endorses and mandates that its members enforce in their facilities.**

On February 24, the [CDC published two reports](#) outlining case studies of COVID-19 outbreaks at fitness centers. These cases found that wearing a mask at a gym, a requirement in all of Oregon's health and fitness facilities, [can prevent COVID outbreaks](#).

For example, last summer [in Hawaii](#), a fitness instructor wore a mask while leading a class less than three days before his symptoms for COVID-19 arrived, and none of the 27 attendees reported positive tests within the following two weeks. However, when the same instructor led another class the following day without a mask at a different venue, each of the 10 participants later tested positive for COVID-19.

### **Masks are very effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19.**

In Oregon, we go beyond the CDC requirements for implementing health and safety precautions in fitness centers, including:

- Mandating mask usage at all times
- Ensuring social distancing – up to 25 feet in “extreme risk” counties
- Decreasing occupancy to well below 5% in some cases, due to arbitrary maximum occupancy requirements that do not take into account a facility's size
- Requiring enhanced sanitization procedures
- Recommending enhanced ventilation and HVAC systems to ensure air flow

With the right precautions, including mandated mask usage, exercising at a health and fitness club exposes you to less risk of contracting COVID-19 than a trip to the grocery store or the doctor's office, which have less strict social distancing and sanitization mandates.

***Oregon's health and fitness clubs are safe.***